

6 MONTHS TO LIVE!

1995 seemed like it was going to be my best year ever. I was co-owner of my law firm. I had a beautiful wife, 3 children, and a house in the country with a white picket fence.

Late that summer, after a series of severe headaches, I was diagnosed with a brain tumor and had immediate surgery.



10/3/95 MRI INITIAL SCAN SHOWING TUMOR (BETWEEN SIZE OF GOLF BALL AND LEMON)

It all seemed like a dream to me. I kept waiting for someone to say they had the wrong chart, and I could go home. I told myself "God wouldn't let something like this happen I had trials scheduled, clients to represent, and a role in my church play, as well as many other responsibilities!"

After surgery I was so groggy my poor wife had to tell me three times I had a terminal brain tumor before it sunk in. I could tell from the look on everyone's face things didn't look good. The tumor was about the size of a lemon. It was a 'Glioblastoma Multiforme IV,' which is one of the most feared types of brain tumors. My physician told us my type of tumor would

likely kill me within 3-6 months, since 95% of those diagnosed with this type of tumor die within 6 months.

Although my surgeon felt he had gotten the entire tumor during surgery, a MRI scan about 6 weeks later showed the tumor had started to grow back.

After much prayer and research, I decided not to go with radiation treatment, as there was no promise of long term remission. Instead, we began an alternative treatment in Houston, Texas.

Over the next 10 months I flew to Houston once a month to see my physician. My tumor was shrinking, and in January 1996, I went back to work at my law firm. Life began to look good again.

Then, in May, a new spot appeared on my MRI scan. It seemed we were back at the beginning again. Over the next 2 months, I underwent extensive treatment. At one point, I was taking over 100 pills a day! Yet, the tumor wouldn't respond. It grew very rapidly, becoming **larger than my first tumor**. In August of 1996, I underwent another surgery.



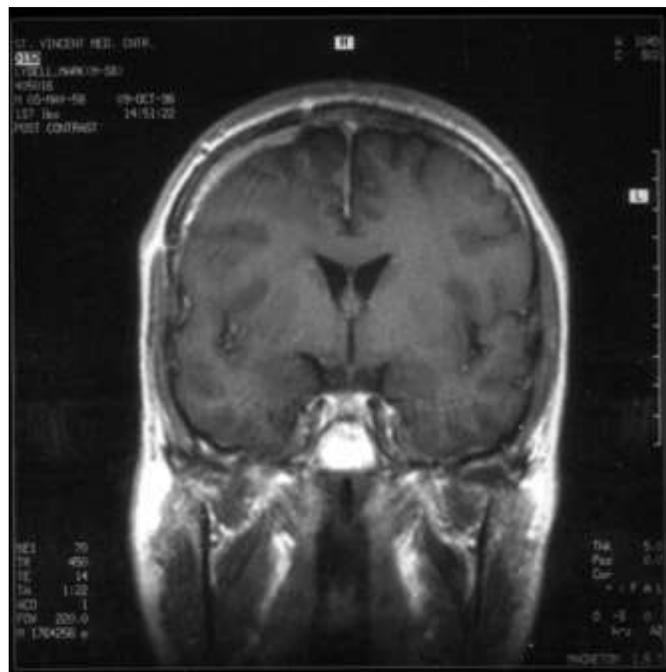
8/12/96 MRI

MRI SCAN BEFORE SECOND SURGERY

Over the next 2 months, my wife and I spent extensive time praying every day. In September we went on a 2 week fast, seeking God's will. Our prayers were that God would get the glory - If I was to be healed, we wanted it be done in such a way there would be no doubt that God was involved.

My MRI in September showed the tumor beginning to grow back again. Our surgeon pushed us to make a decision on treatment.

In October we flew down to L.A. to see a cancer specialist. After having another MRI scan done, he sent us home; saying he would review my records and call me back if he thought his treatment would help me. He called me back 2 days later, saying he could not treat me. The MRI showed no trace of a tumor, so there was nothing for him to treat! Since then, my scans have continued to come back clean, despite the fact I never had any chemotherapy or radiation treatments!



10/9/96 MRI

MRI SCAN SHOWING NO TUMOR!

Another physician who examined me made the statement "If this man doesn't know God, he should!" He based this on his 25 years of experience treating brain tumor patients, none of whom survived.

Looking back, I know the turning point for me was during that time in September right before my last surgery when I was able to honestly and

sincerely pray to God that, while I wanted to live longer, I accepted His will for my life - even if that meant I would not be healed and die. I completely trusted my life into His hands.

Although I had become a "born again" Christian many years before, I had slowly allowed my faith to become replaced with other things. I was working many long hours to help build my law practice, thinking I would always have time in the future to slow down, and spend with my family.

I first viewed my cancer as an "intrusion" into my little world. Now I know I was given a chance that many people do not get - the opportunity to really find out what is most important in life. It isn't money, power, or fame, as none of that will last.

I continue to be thankful to God for sparing my life. I was headed towards death, yet God healed me and gave me life.

If you need help, or would like to contact me, please feel free to e-mail me through this site.

The rest of the story.....

Most of you have heard about and read my cancer testimony. There is another aspect to it that my wife reminded me that I hadn't posted for everyone to read.

Not only did we have a physical healing, but we also were blessed with a financial healing as well. There aren't many people who collect on their life insurance and live to tell about it! Here's what happened...

When I was sick, one of the things we did was purchase a motor home. The purpose was for us to be able to take some final family vacations together before I died. There was an elderly couple down the street from us that had a motor home they were selling, and the price was right so we bought it from them.

On one of our first trips we stopped in Gridley to stock up on groceries at the local Safeway store. When we came out, the RV wouldn't start. We were on our way out of town, so we were anxious to get going, and when you only have 6 months to live, you don't want to waste any time!!!

"By coincidence" a friend of ours from church was also there shopping. He was a life insurance salesman, and while he was helping us jump start the RV, he was talking to me about my situation. He knew about my brain tumor, and that I had a rather large life insurance policy on myself.

When I entered into my law office partnership my partner insisted that we both have large life insurance policies as well as disability insurance on ourselves. I didn't think I would need either of them since I was in my early thirties, but this was yet another example of God working through someone else in my life to protect us down the road.

OK, back to the story....When I was talking to that life insurance salesman in that parking lot, he told me about a provision in California law that said you were entitled to collect up to half of your life insurance if you were diagnosed with a terminal illness and likely to die within 6 months to one year. I looked into it, and found out that all I needed was an opinion from two physicians saying I would not live more than one year.

The reason behind this law was to allow the person who took out the policy and was sick to help direct how some of the money was spent, i.e. "putting their affairs in order."

We appointments with two local doctors, both of whom confirmed my diagnoses. They must have thought we were crazy. We didn't want any of

their treatment, all we wanted was for them to say I was going to die within a year and sign the papers!

So, we get these opinions and send them off to the insurance company. They sent us half of our insurance policy, which was enough for us to pay off the mortgage on our house, both cars and all our accounts. Of course, at that time it did look like I was going to die and I was anxious to make sure that everything was paid off and in order for my wife so she would not have to move out of the house after I passed on.

It was very shortly after that when we went on our fast, and then had my consultation with the physician in Los Angeles which showed no trace of tumor!

In God's perfect timing, he put that insurance salesman in our path at the absolute time when we were able to get the opinions from the docs saying I was going to die, and then after receiving the money did He move with His healing touch. If I hadn't heard about that little provision in the law, my healing would have prevented me from receiving the life insurance monies.

Many people ask me what the life insurance company did. There was nothing they could do. All I had to do was promise to die someday.

And that, as Paul Harvey used to say, is the rest of the story.

Glory be to God for his perfect timing!

Dog-Chair-Happy



Kerri has her own side to my cancer, and one story in particular she likes to share:

In the fall of 1995 my husband woke up one Monday morning to find he had a headache so bad he couldn't make it into work. This was unusual for him to even consider staying home...he was married to his profession! The following day when it was no better I made an appointment for him to go in and be seen at our local hospital. The Dr. did an evaluation and ordered a Cat Scan. We walked across the street and Mark entered the radiology dept. as I settled into a chair for what I thought would be at least a 20 min magazine article. I was suddenly distracted from what I was reading when Mark came out with a very worried looking technician. He was hurriedly ushering Mark with some films out towards me with some instructions to give these to the Dr. he will want to see these. We obeyed his directions and in minutes stood inside the Dr.'s exam room once again this time we were looking at someone who was visibly shaken and giving us more instructions.

We were to see a "neurologist" in Chico. In my experience as a former claims adjuster I realized this had something to do with Mark's brain but as a wife I just couldn't go "there". While driving the thirty minutes on Highway 99 Mark snuck a peek at the films. He looked at them but never mentioned anything strange. When we arrived we were taken into Dr. Lobosky's examination room. He introduced himself as we shook hands all around. He immediately gave Mark 3 words and said I want you to repeat these words back to me when I ask you. After he put Mark through a battery of tests he gave us 3 scenarios. One was a stroke; the other was a benign tumor or...a malignant tumor. He then told us Mark would need to be hospitalized immediately for surgery in the morning. He then turned to Mark and said give me the three words I gave you earlier ...which Mark did without problem. Dog-Chair-Happy. I was sent home to gather some of Marks things he would need while Mark spent the next hour encased in an MRI machine to get better pictures. While at home I had moments on the telephone with close family and friends to ask for prayer. Then I threw myself on my bed and cried before I got back into the car and drove back to meet Mark. Again alone with my thoughts I wept and prayed as I drove the 30 miles back. The next morning as Mark and I were discussing the things you can only imagine you talk about when you face something like this in your marriage. I was afraid that if something were to happen to him while they were operating on his brain that I needed to know right away if he was "in there". We agreed upon those 3 words of Dr Lobosky's.

DOG-CHAIR-HAPPY

When they told me I could go into the recovery room...I took a deep breath and walked in not knowing what I would find but I had the hope of those words and Jesus holding my hand. When I looked down at the man who so often looked at me with such tender love I could barely breathe as I recounted the horrible words the Dr. had spoken only moments ago ...malignant....terminal...3-6 months...It is just not possible...I just needed to see him and everything would be okay. When he opened his eyes and focused upon me he smiled and before I could find any reason to fear he said those glorious words...

DOG-CHAIR-HAPPY

God's Power

I was looking through my pictures recently and came across some I took back almost two years ago, in June 2003. The story behind these pictures is an incredible testimony of God's power and grace.

My family was in southern California on vacation in Oceanside. One afternoon, we headed over to the beach. My son and I walked out onto one of the jetties so I could get some pictures of him, since the waves were crashing pretty good and I thought it would be a cool background.



We kept walking out further and further, getting splashed all along the way. We finally got to the end where there was a pole sticking up out of the rocks. Brian posed next to it so I could get a good picture. As I framed the picture in the camera, I saw a wave coming in. I knew that when it hit the jetty and splashed it would be a dramatic backdrop. The wave hit, I snapped the shutter.



But, when I put the camera down, this is what I saw:



I dropped my camera and ran up to find out where my son was at.

I was in shock. One second my son was there and the next, he was gone. I panicked thinking he got washed away into the ocean!

As I got closer, I saw my son's head crop up from between two of the rocks. I ran up, grabbed his hand and pulled him out. The right side of his face was covered in blood.

We made it about 5 steps towards land, and as I looked back, I saw another big wave getting ready to hit. I stopped and braced my son and myself.

When the wave hit, it actually pushed both of us about 3-4 feet - I thought we were going to get washed off together, but it just got us both drenched. My camera, which was a digital, also got soaked. At the time I wasn't concerned but I figured that everything on it was lost.

As soon as it was clear, we started running to get on to the beach.

When we got onto the beach, my wife and I went into a local office to look for a first aid kit and to dry off. The ambulance arrived and checked Brian out. He had a pretty good gash on the side of his head, so we drove him to the local emergency room to get checked out - he was fine, just banged up. The cut was one of those facial cuts that made you bleed like crazy.

While we were in the car, I pulled out our bible. As I look through it, I came across the following passages in Psalm 69. It seemed like God was telling us how this was a living example of how He had come to rescue us.

Later, when we got back to the home, I was surprised to find out that the pictures on the memory card were still there. I loaded them all up, and we were finally able to look and see what happened to my son when the wave hit: (If you look close, you can see him still standing in the middle...)



While we were on the way to the hospital, my wife found a passage in Psalms that really spoke to all of us and what we just went through. It

especially spoke to my son, and where he was at right then with some of the questions he had been asking God at that time. My son wrote about his side of the story – that's on the next page...

Psalm 69:1 -2 :

**Save me, O God, for the waters have come up to my neck.
I sink in the miry depths, where there is no foothold.
I have come into the deep waters; the floods engulf me.**

Psalm 69:14 -16:

**Rescue me from the mire, do not let me sink; deliver me from those who hate me, from the deep waters.
Do not let the floodwaters engulf me or the depths swallow me up or the pit close its mouth over me.
Answer me, O LORD, out of the goodness of your love; in your great mercy turn to me.**

God's Power – my son's perspective

If you've read my dad's blog, you've probably seen the post he made about the accident at Oceanside. A couple years ago, me and my family were on vacation at a seaside resort, and on the second-to-last day I almost drowned. On the drive up, one of the things going through my mind was this prayer that God would help me personally understand salvation in a new way. When we arrived at Oceanside, it turned out to be a fairly normal vacation. We checked out many of the things the town had to offer, restaurants hanging over a cliff above the ocean, boardwalks, and beaches.

The day before we left we checked out the shops on the boardwalk. By the time evening set in, it was a nice end to a nice day. We walked over to the beach to enjoy the rest of daylight. My dad and I found a jetty made of rocks jutting from the shore into the ocean. We started making our way through it, as waves crashed against it and soaked us. My dad was shooting pictures as we went along. I went up ahead to a lone pole at the end and looked back for the picture. A moment later a gigantic wave dashed against the rocks behind me dramatically. Dad snaps a picture just as it engulfs me entirely. This wave was much more powerful than any of the other ones, and I could sense myself collapsing, and, I thought, going under. All I knew was that I was down, to the best of my knowledge probably sinking underwater. It seemed in that moment that this was how I was going to die. The darkness cleared, the water was gone, at least for the moment. All I could see was rocks around me, and then a hand appeared. Fighting against the weight of drenched clothes, I took it dizzily. I wasn't aware of what had really happened. But we still had to get to shore, the adrenaline rush was still driving us to escape. A lesser wave pounded against the jetty's side and pushed us, but together we braced for it, and made it to shore at last.

A few minutes later, I was staring at myself in a mirror in a local restroom, washing the blood off my face. I was looking for any kind of dent or bruise on my head, which I was most afraid of. While I waited for the ambulance, I lay down on a bench as my family and a few spectators were gathered. I knew I was going to a hospital, an ambulance was coming. Great.

The next few hours were a long cold wait in a little cold hospital where I was examined, poked and prodded for details, and released after they determined everything would heal naturally and quickly. Driving back to our hotel, my parents and I began drawing spiritual parallels about the whole event, and found verses in Psalms that seemed to directly tie in with what happened. We drove back home the next day, me with swollen faith and swollen face.